And I am preſt vnto it, therefore ſpeake.

Baſſ. In *Belmont* is a Lady richly left,
And ſhe is faire, and fairer then that word,
Of wondrous vertues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receiue faire ſpeechleſſe meſſages:
Her name is *Portia*; nothing vnder-valew'd
To *Catos* daughter, *Brutus Portia.*
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the foure winds blow in from euery coaſt
Renowned ſutors, and her ſunny lockes
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,
which makes her ſeat of *Belmont*, *Colchos* ſtrond,
And many *Iaſons* comes in queſt of her.
O my *Anthonio*, had I but the meanes
To hold a riuall place with one of them,
I haue a minde preſages me ſuch thrift,
That I ſhould queſtionleſſe be fortunate.

Ant. Thou knowſt that all my fortunes are at ſea,
Neither haue I money, nor commodity,
To raiſe a preſent ſumme. Therefore go forth,
Try what my credit can in Venice do,
That ſhall be rackt euen to the vttermoſt,
To furniſh thee to *Belmont* to faire *Portia.*
Go preſently enquire, and ſo will I
where money is, and I no queſtion make,
To haue it of my truſt, or for my ſake. *Exeunt*

Enter Portia with her waiting Woman Nerriſſa.

Portia. By my troth *Nerriſſa*, my little body is a wearie of this great world.

Ner. You would be ſweet Madam, if your miſeries were in the ſame abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet for ought I ſee, they are as ſick that ſurfet with too much, as they that ſtarue with nothing; it is no meane happineſſe therefore to be ſeated in the meane, ſuperfluity comes ſooner by white haires, but competency liues longer.

Por.

Portia. Good ſentences, and well pronoun
Ner. They would be better, if well follow
Por. If to do, were as eaſie as to know w
do, Chappels had beene Churches, and poo
Princes Pallaces; it is a good diuine that foll
ſtructions: I can eaſier teach twenty what
done, then to be one of the twenty to follow
ing: the braine may deuiſe lawes for the blo
per leapes ore a colde decree, ſuch a hare is m
to skip ore the meſhes of good counſell the
reaſoning is not in the faſhion to chooſe me
the word chooſe, I may neyther chooſe who
who I diſlike, ſo is the will of a liuing daug
will of a dead father: is it not hard *Neriſſa*, th
one, nor refuſe none.

Ner. Your father was euer vertuous, and
death haue good inſpirations, therefore the
deuiſed in theſe three cheſts of gold, ſiluer, a
who chooſes his meaning chooſes you, no d
be choſen by any rightly, but one who ſhall
what warmth is there in your affection to
Princely ſuters that are already come?

Por. I prethee ouer-name them, and as th
will deſcribe them, and according to my de
my affection.

Ner. Firſt, there is the Neapolitane Prince

Por. I that's a colt indeed, for hee doth n
his horſe, and he makes it a great appropriat
good parts, that he can ſhoo himſelfe: I am m
dy his Mother plaid falſe with a ſmith.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frowne (as wh
will not haue me, chooſe; he heares merry t
I feare he will prooue the weeping Philoſop
old, being ſo full of vnmannerly ſadneſſe in hi
ther be married to a deaths head with a bone

B.